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REPORT ON

# THE NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION

JUNE 26, 1935, TO JUNE 30, 1938

Reprinted from REPORT ON PROGRESS  
OF THE WPA PROGRAM, June 30, 1938

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# THE NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION

**T**HE problems confronting the Nation's youth have been intensified by the recent increase in unemployment. At the time of the National Unemployment Census taken in November 1937 not far from 3,500,000 young persons between the ages of 16 and 24 years (including emergency workers on Federal programs) were unemployed. By May 1938 the number probably approached 4,500,000 as a consequence of the intensification of unemployment that took place after November. Not only has the spreading of unemployment further limited the possibilities of obtaining jobs; it has also caused reduction in the income of family heads upon whom many youth rely for part or all of their support, thereby increasing their difficulties in continuing school work.

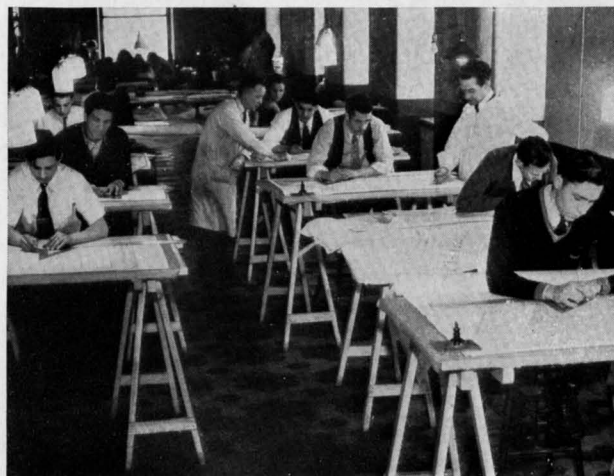
The National Youth Administration was established in 1935 to initiate and administer a program of projects that would provide work and work experience for unemployed youth and assist youth in obtaining an education. Through the NYA, project employment has been given to out-of-school youth and aid has been extended to students who otherwise could not continue in school. The NYA has also expanded the job placement and vocational guidance services available to young people.

Federal activities for youth also include the program of the Civilian Conservation Corps which, established in 1933, provides employment and vocational training at CCC camps for young men in need of work. Enrollees in the Corps (almost all are unmarried young men between the ages of 17 and 23 inclusive) are engaged in useful public work in connection with the conservation and development of the country's natural resources. At the end of May 1938, 302,000 persons were working under the CCC program in some 1,500 camps.

The appropriation of \$75,000,000 to the National Youth Administration through the ERA Act of 1938 will make possible the assistance of approximately 600,000 young persons during the year ending June 30,

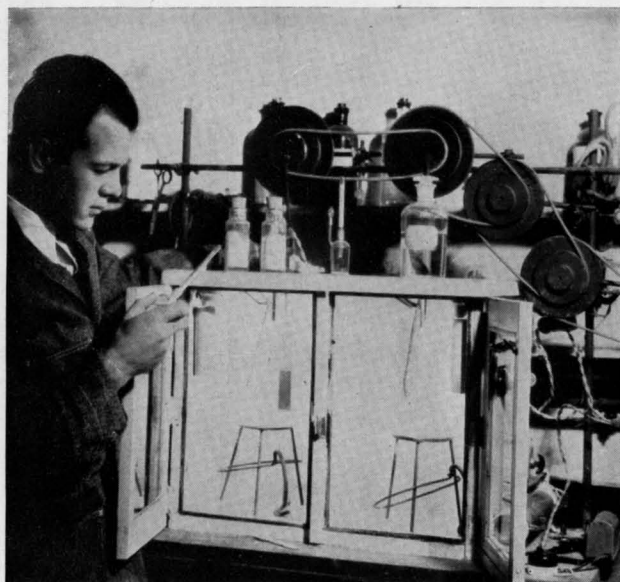
1939. The aid provided will be similar to that being given currently. The student aid program is expected to be maintained at about the same level as in the past school year, but work for out-of-school youth, particularly resident training projects (designed to permit youth to reside at the site of the project operations and to combine work experience with related instruction), will be expanded. During May 1938 the National Youth Administration had about 327,000 high-school and college students on its student aid rolls and approximately 179,000 out-of-school youth at work on NYA work projects.

To finance NYA activities during the year ending June 30, 1938, nearly \$52,800,000 had been allocated by June 30, 1938: \$18,900,000 for the operation of the student aid program and \$33,900,000 for work projects. Practically all Federal funds are expended in payments to project workers. On the student aid program all nonlabor costs are borne by the participating institutions. On work projects sponsors have borne nearly 12 percent of total costs (in recent months approximately 20 percent), largely in supplying supervisory services and meeting various nonlabor expenses.



NYA GIVES WORK EXPERIENCE





STUDENT AID ASSISTANT IN CHEMICAL RESEARCH

Although the NYA was established within the Works Progress Administration and its executive director is also deputy administrator of the WPA, administratively the two agencies are distinct. Youth administrations that function separately and apart from the State Works Progress Administrations have been set up in each State, the District of Columbia, and New York City, and for conducting the student aid program, in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. In order to avoid setting up duplicate services, however, the NYA operates through the WPA in such matters as finance, employment, safety, and statistics. A State youth director appointed in each State is directly responsible for the program of the State.

The NYA is assisted in the operation of its programs by an executive committee and a national advisory committee appointed by the President and composed of persons representing labor, business, agriculture, education, and youth. These committees advise on and approve general administrative policies and objectives. Similar State and local advisory committees, appointed by the State youth directors, have contributed in a large measure to the development of work projects which are suitable to the needs both of the local youth and of the communities. The combined membership of the State committees totals 650 men and women. The 2,600 local committees have a total membership of 15,500 men and women. Existing public and private agencies in the communities also cooperate in the operation of NYA programs.

## The Student Aid Program

The NYA student aid program gives part-time employment to students who, without this assistance, would be unable to continue their education. This

represents a continuation of the FERA college student aid program, expanded to include assistance to high-school students and some elementary-school pupils, provided they are between the ages of 16 and 24 inclusive, and thus satisfy the age requirement as to eligibility.

## Participating Institutions

Only "non-profit-making and tax-exempt, bona fide educational institutions" may participate in the program; certification of the eligibility of a school is made by the State superintendent of education. The undergraduate college aid program is carried on in schools which require for entrance high-school graduation or its equivalent; the graduate aid program is conducted in recognized universities. In May 1938, NYA student aid was extended in 23,845 institutions. School aid was extended to students in 22,189 secondary schools. Of the 1,656 colleges and universities which assisted college undergraduates and graduates, 1,499 extended aid to undergraduate students only, 141 to both graduates and undergraduates, and 16 to graduates only.

TABLE 38.—NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE NYA STUDENT AID PROGRAM, BY TYPES OF AID

MAY 1936, 1937, AND 1938

Type of Aid	May 1936	May 1937	May 1938
Total.....	18, 295	22, 500	23, 845
School aid.....	16, 658	20, 816	22, 189
College and graduate aid.....	1, 637	1, 684	1, 656
College aid only.....	1, 425	1, 496	1, 499
College and graduate aid.....	179	172	141
Graduate aid only.....	33	16	16

For institutions participating in the school aid program, employment quotas are established for individual schools within the States on the basis of relative relief needs of particular localities or regions of the State and school enrollments. The number of students receiving NYA aid in each school may not exceed 10 percent of the previous year's regular enrollment except upon special approval of the State youth director. Similar criteria are used in determining the distribution of funds among the States.

For college aid each institution's monthly fund quota amounts to 8 percent of the previous year's enrollment of full-time students between the ages of 16 and 24 inclusive, multiplied by \$15 (the maximum monthly average for a college aid recipient). No special allotments are made for graduate aid, but each institution may extend aid at a higher rate of pay to graduate students than to undergraduate students, the funds coming from the general fund quota. Where it is found that the fund quota for an institution is in excess of the need, the State youth director, with the approval of the central office of the National Youth Administration, may



transfer the excess funds to an institution whose quota is insufficient. Within each institution there are no restrictions on the assignment of more students than are provided for in the fund quotas at a proportionately lower monthly rate of pay.

## Employment

Officials of participating schools decide on the eligibility of students according to general requirements of the NYA. Primary consideration is given to the question of whether or not the student needs assistance in order to be able to enter or remain in school. In addition to this and the age requirement already cited, are citizenship or declaration of intent to become a citizen, good character, ability to perform good scholastic work while receiving student aid, and the carrying of at least three-fourths of the normal scholastic schedule.

The work performed by students in earning their allowances must be practical and useful and adapted to the abilities and interests of the students. It may be supplemental to the usual work of the institution but must not result in the displacement of workers normally paid from other funds. Within these limitations and operating in accordance with a work plan prepared by the school and approved by the State NYA director, selection of work to be done and assignment of eligible students to work are the responsibility of school officials. Varied types of work are performed under the supervision of teachers and other school employees, including clerical, construction, library, mimeographing, ground and building maintenance, research, home economics, art, laboratory, and recreation work.

The NYA student aid program was inaugurated in the fall of 1935 and at the beginning of the following year more than 300,000 young persons were participating. The number of students receiving aid in each month since September 1935 is shown by types of institutions in Table 39. In May 1938, 326,644 students were receiving assistance. Of this number 225,554 were school aid recipients, 98,563 were undergraduate college students, and 2,527 were graduate college students. This total is about 99,000 below the May 1937 total. The current scope of the student aid program is

TABLE 39.—NUMBER OF STUDENTS ASSISTED UNDER THE NYA STUDENT AID PROGRAM, BY TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

MONTHLY—SEPTEMBER 1935 TO MAY 1938

Month	Total	School	College	Graduate
<b>1935</b>				
September.....	34,924	26,163	8,700	61
October.....	183,594	75,033	104,969	3,592
November.....	234,450	118,273	111,500	4,677
December.....	282,829	159,158	118,453	5,218
<b>1936</b>				
January.....	306,490	189,031	112,654	4,805
February.....	351,302	227,629	118,623	5,050
March.....	380,099	256,706	117,287	6,106
April.....	404,749	275,544	122,498	6,707
May.....	398,362	266,304	125,758	6,300
June.....	214,603	127,121	80,932	6,550
<b>1937</b>				
July.....	239	239		
August.....	1,707	1,707		
September.....	62,969	52,155	10,730	84
October.....	341,583	207,964	128,771	4,858
November.....	400,253	257,475	137,250	5,528
December.....	412,210	270,464	136,572	5,174
<b>1938</b>				
January.....	418,721	276,584	136,733	5,404
February.....	428,818	283,738	139,541	5,539
March.....	442,100	294,456	142,127	5,517
April.....	443,986	297,871	140,699	5,416
May.....	425,694	280,427	139,841	5,426
June.....	249,826	153,168	92,382	4,276
<b>1939</b>				
July.....	36	36		
August.....	36,581	31,758	4,688	135
September.....	244,648	155,793	86,831	2,024
October.....	284,535	189,180	93,037	2,318
November.....	304,979	206,051	96,393	2,535
<b>1940</b>				
January.....	310,877	212,471	95,903	2,503
February.....	321,357	220,612	98,177	2,568
March.....	328,159	226,466	99,071	2,622
April.....	335,401	233,677	99,126	2,598
May.....	326,644	225,554	98,563	2,527

roughly equivalent to that of the school year 1935-36. The practical discontinuance of the student aid program in the summer is, of course, accounted for by the summer vacations of schools and colleges.

CHART 9  
NYA STUDENT AID EMPLOYMENT  
BY SCHOOL YEARS

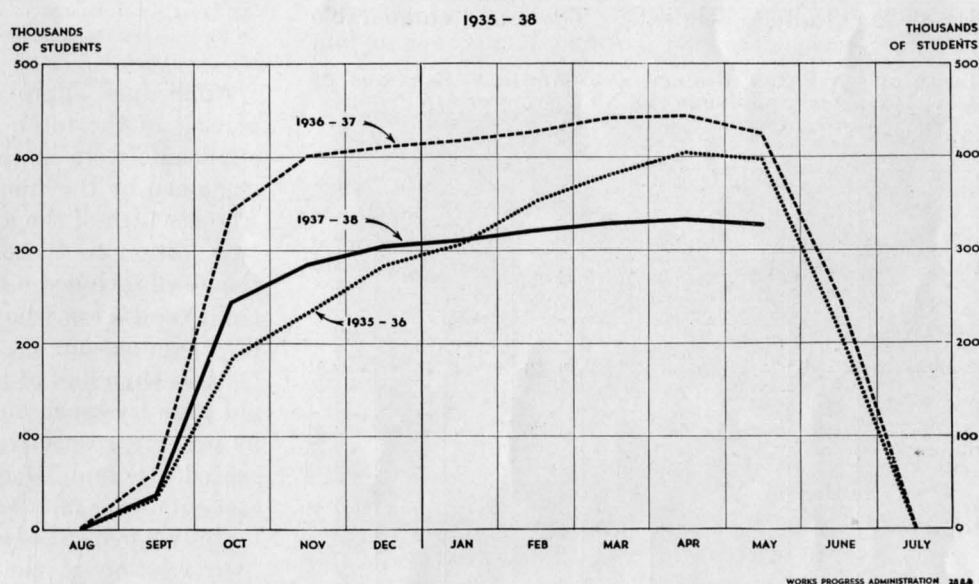


TABLE 40.—NUMBER OF STUDENTS ASSISTED UNDER THE NYA STUDENT AID PROGRAM, BY TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS AND BY SEX

MAY 1938

Type of Institution	Total	Men		Women	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	326,644	163,723	50.1	162,921	49.9
School.....	225,554	104,128	46.2	121,426	53.8
College.....	98,563	57,714	58.6	40,849	41.4
Graduate.....	2,527	1,881	74.4	646	25.6

Approximately half of the student aid recipients in May 1938 were girls. Among the school aid recipients the girls slightly outnumbered the boys. Young women represented 41 percent of the undergraduate college students receiving NYA aid and 26 percent of the recipients of graduate aid.

## Hours and Earnings

Secondary-school students may earn up to \$6 each month. Undergraduate college students may earn not more than \$20 in any single school month. Graduate students may earn up to \$40 in one month, the average for the group throughout the school year not to exceed \$30. For all recipients in any college or university, however, the average may not exceed \$15 a month. Hourly rates of pay at which students are employed as they earn the monthly allowances are the same as those prevailing in the institution or locality for the same type of work. Hours of work in secondary schools must not exceed 7 a day on nonschool days, 3 on school days, and 20 a week. For college students 8 hours a day and 30 hours a week (40 hours a week during vacation periods) are maximum amounts permitted. In May 1938, average monthly earnings were \$4.74 for school aid recipients, \$12.89 for undergraduate college students, and \$18.85 for graduate students. These and comparable

TABLE 41.—AVERAGE HOURLY AND MONTHLY EARNINGS OF STUDENTS ASSISTED UNDER THE NYA STUDENT AID PROGRAM, BY TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

SELECTED MONTHS—NOVEMBER 1935 TO MAY 1938

Month	Total		School		College		Graduate	
	Hourly	Month-ly	Hourly	Month-ly	Hourly	Month-ly	Hourly	Month-ly
1935								
November....	\$0.307	\$8.94	\$0.238	\$5.23	\$0.331	\$12.42	\$0.516	\$19.44
1936								
May.....	.290	8.92	.243	5.80	.325	14.89	.509	21.56
November....	.293	7.81	.243	4.82	.329	12.79	.523	23.59
1937								
May.....	.292	8.58	.246	5.36	.329	14.41	.531	24.67
November....	.289	6.98	.244	4.41	.330	11.92	.485	17.73
1938								
May.....	.287	7.31	.246	4.74	.328	12.89	.471	18.85

figures for selected earlier months are shown in Table 41. Such payments account for all Federal expenditures on the student aid program. In Table 48 below, total expenditures for this program are shown for selected periods.

## Applicants Approved for Student Aid

Applications for student aid filed by students for the school year 1937-38 serve to indicate the characteristics of the student aid applicants and, to a considerable extent, the characteristics of the recipients of student aid. From the 334,000 applications approved through December 1937, data have been derived on the number of approved applicants in each school grade, the age and sex of applicants, and characteristics of their families.

TABLE 42.—NUMBER OF APPROVED APPLICANTS FOR NYA STUDENT AID, BY SCHOOL GRADES

SCHOOL YEAR 1937-38

School Grade	Number	Percent <sup>A</sup>
School aid		
Total.....	227,007	100.0
Below eighth.....	3,370	1.5
Eighth.....	6,334	2.9
Ninth.....	21,648	9.7
Tenth.....	42,421	19.1
Eleventh.....	71,771	32.2
Twelfth.....	75,524	33.9
Postgraduate.....	1,659	0.7
Unknown.....	4,280	
College aid		
Total.....	107,214	100.0
Freshman.....	31,054	29.5
Sophomore.....	30,897	29.4
Junior.....	21,840	20.8
Senior.....	18,188	17.3
Graduate.....	3,178	3.0
Unknown.....	2,057	

<sup>A</sup> Percentages are based on total applicants of known grade.

Applicants approved for school aid comprised 68 percent of the total. That nearly two-thirds of these applicants were in the eleventh and twelfth grades is explained by the minimum age limitation of 16 years. About a fifth of the applicants were in the tenth grade. In addition to those in the eighth and ninth grades the total included a few students in grades below the eighth and a few who were taking courses in high school after graduation.

More than half of the applicants approved for college aid were freshmen and sophomores, representing 30 and 29 percent, respectively. Juniors and seniors represented 21 and 17 percent, respectively. Graduate students were relatively limited in number, accounting for only 3 percent of all approved college aid applicants.

In relation to the total attendance in the various grades as reported by the United States Office of



Education, the ratio of approved applications was higher in the college grades (10 percent) than in the school grades where it ranged from 7 percent in the twelfth grade to less than 1 percent in the eighth grade.

TABLE 43.—TOTAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND NUMBER OF APPROVED APPLICANTS FOR NYA STUDENT AID, BY SCHOOL GRADES

School Grade	Total School Attendance <sup>A</sup>	Approved Applicants for NYA Student Aid <sup>B</sup>	
		Number	Percent of total school attendance
	School aid		
Eighth.....	1,747,390	6,458	0.4
Ninth.....	1,975,718	22,063	1.1
Tenth.....	1,623,373	43,239	2.7
Eleventh.....	1,252,017	73,149	5.8
Twelfth.....	1,066,645	76,975	7.2
	College aid		
All.....	1,055,360	107,214	10.2

<sup>A</sup> Source: Office of Education, Biennial Survey of Education. Data by school grade are for 1935-36; data on college attendance are for 1933-34.

<sup>B</sup> Data are for school year 1937-38. Applicants whose grade is unknown are distributed proportionately.

As may be assumed from the predominance of school aid applicants, the largest number of applicants were in the lower age brackets, with the 16-18-year age group accounting for nearly 70 percent of the total approved applications. About 90 percent of the applicants approved for school aid and 25 percent of those for college aid were in this age group.

TABLE 44.—PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL STUDENTS AND OF NYA STUDENT AID APPLICANTS, BY AGES

Age	All Students <sup>A</sup>	Approved Applicants for NYA Student Aid <sup>B</sup>		
		Total	School aid	College and graduate aid
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
16.....	33.9	24.8	35.9	1.1
17.....	23.7	28.1	38.0	7.1
18.....	15.6	17.0	16.9	17.5
19.....	9.5	11.3	6.2	22.1
20.....	6.3	7.4	1.9	19.0
21-24.....	11.0	11.4	1.1	33.2

<sup>A</sup> Source: 1930 Census of Population, Volume II.

<sup>B</sup> Data are for school year 1937-38.

Associated with the differences among the various grades in the proportion of students for whom aid is approved are the differences between the age distributions of the approved applicants and the entire school population. Since the percentage that student aid applicants constitute of all persons attending school tended to increase with advance in grade, it may be expected that the concentration in the lower age groups would be less for approved applicants than for all persons attending school. Evidence of this is shown in Table 44.

Young men and young women are found in about equal numbers among the approved applicants, paralleling comparable 1930 census data on school attendance. For student aid applicants the percentages were 51.3 for young men and 48.7 for young women. The census figures show 51.1 percent of the general school population as young men and 48.9 percent as young women.

Almost a third of the total approved applicants were members of family groups of seven or more persons. The median size of families of student aid applicants was 5.3 persons; of school aid applicants, 5.6 persons; and of college aid recipients, 4.8 persons.

Heads of the families of which the applicants approved for student aid are members include unemployed persons, WPA workers, and workers in all types of occupations. Nearly 17 percent of the heads of these families were totally unemployed. About 10 percent were employed on WPA projects.

Of the family heads who had private employment, farm operators and laborers accounted for the largest proportion (30 percent). This occupational group also predominated, but to a lesser extent (21 percent), in the total gainful workers reported by the 1930 census. Unskilled workers accounted for 13 percent of the heads of families in the case of applicants, as they did in the case of all gainful workers in 1930. Many other family heads were employed as skilled and semiskilled workers but relatively few were professional and technical workers, proprietors, office workers, or salesmen.

The proportions of family heads of school aid applicants in the various occupational classifications differed markedly from those of college aid applicants. Farm operators and laborers were reported as the family head by 35 percent of all school aid applicants and by 22 percent of all college aid applicants. Aside from this occupational group, family heads of school aid applicants were for the most part unskilled, semiskilled, skilled, and domestic and personal service workers. On the



CAFETERIA WORK FOR NYA STUDENT

TABLE 45.—PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL GAINFUL WORKERS AND OF EMPLOYED FAMILY HEADS OF NYA STUDENT AID APPLICANTS, BY OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	All Gainful Workers <sup>A</sup>	Family Heads of Approved Applicants for NYA Student Aid <sup>B</sup>		
		Total	School aid applicants	College aid applicants
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Professional and technical workers.....	6.3	5.3	1.9	10.9
Proprietors, managers, and officials <sup>C</sup> .....	7.2	6.1	2.4	12.3
Office workers.....	9.4	4.7	2.5	8.3
Salesmen and kindred workers.....	6.9	5.1	2.7	9.0
Skilled workers.....	12.9	13.2	12.1	15.0
Semiskilled workers.....	14.6	13.6	15.3	10.8
Unskilled workers <sup>D</sup> .....	12.5	12.9	17.4	5.4
Domestic and personal service workers.....	8.8	9.1	10.7	6.3
Farm operators and laborers.....	21.4	30.0	35.0	22.0

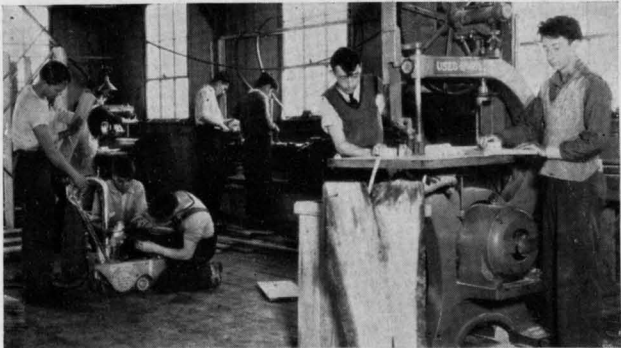
<sup>A</sup> Source: 1930 Census, Occupations, Vol. V. Unemployed persons are included in the distribution.  
<sup>B</sup> Data are for school year 1937-38. Unemployed persons, WPA workers, and persons whose occupations are unknown are not included in the distribution. These family heads represented 16.7 percent, 9.5 percent, and 0.9 percent, respectively, of total family heads.  
<sup>C</sup> Excludes farm operators.  
<sup>D</sup> Excludes farm laborers.

other hand, college aid applicants belonged to families whose chief wage earners were more evenly distributed among all occupational groups, including, besides many skilled and semiskilled workers, relatively large numbers of proprietors and managers of business enterprises, persons in professional and technical positions, salesmen, and office workers. The occupational distribution of family heads of approved student aid applicants is shown in Table 45.

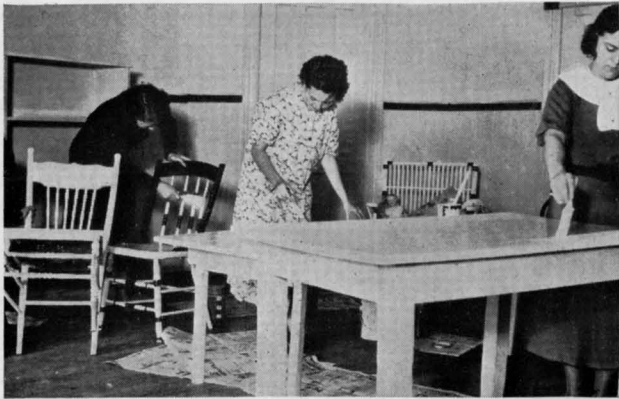
The median annual family income of student aid applicants was \$703. The median for families of approved school aid applicants was \$563 and for families of approved college aid applicants, \$1,163. Only 32 percent of the applicants were from families with incomes of \$1,000 or more.

### Work Projects

The work program of the National Youth Administration gives part-time employment on work projects to needy young people between the ages of 18 and 24 inclusive who are no longer in school. By this means young people are given some assistance in case of need



AT WORK IN A CARPENTER SHOP



PAINTING FURNITURE FOR A DAY NURSERY

and are enabled to acquire work habits and experience invaluable to their location in private employment.

Preference in employment on the NYA work program is given to young persons certified by public relief agencies as in need of relief. Except with the specific authorization of the Federal Works Progress Administration at least 90 percent of the workers on each project must be so certified. Noncertified persons are employed chiefly in supervisory capacities.

The State youth director has the responsibility of working out arrangements with the relief agencies whereby all necessary information may be obtained so that determination can readily be made of the size of the employable load of persons eligible for NYA employment. Eligibility is dependent upon a youth's being a member of a family in need of relief, regardless of whether the primary wage earner is employed on projects of the WPA or other Federal agencies or certified for such employment, or is a member of a family eligible for any form of public assistance.

Initial assignment of young persons to projects is made by the WPA Division of Employment. Requisitions for workers made out by the State youth director or his representatives are filled by the Employment Division after the State youth director interviews the young persons as to their qualifications and makes recommendations concerning their proper placement and occupational classification. In making his recommendation to the WPA Division of Employment the director gives consideration to individual need for rehabilitation, work experience, and training. All persons employed on NYA work must maintain active registration with the employment offices of the United States Employment Service, which make referrals of the registrants whenever suitable openings occur in private industry or regular public work.

Any public, quasi-public, or nonprofit private agency may cooperate in the operation of a work project. Such agencies, considered as cosponsors, prepare project applications. Cosponsors have shared in the expense of project operation by providing cash, equipment and materials, or supervision to the extent of 12



percent of total costs. Currently they are assuming a much greater proportion, about 20 percent.

Projects may be proposed for operation by the State youth administration as well as by cosponsors. Within the limitation of funds provided, the responsibility for promotion and approval of NYA work projects lies with the State youth directors. However, applications for building construction projects where the value of the materials required is more than \$500 and for resident training projects must be submitted to the Washington office of the National Youth Administration for approval. Statistical, survey, and research projects must be approved by the Coordinator of Statistical, Survey, and Research Projects of the WPA in Washington.

The State youth directors also have the responsibility for providing adequate supervision to insure efficient and safe operation of all projects.

### Types of Activity

The NYA work program involves various types of projects covering both construction work and non-construction activities. Construction projects include highway, road, and street work, remodeling of public buildings and construction of new buildings, development of recreational facilities, and conservation work. Nonconstruction projects include a variety of activities such as sewing, recreational leadership, museum work, school lunches, clerical and stenographic work, library service and book repair, statistical and research work, youth center activities, and workshop projects. The relative importance of the different types of projects in terms of employment provided is indicated in Table 47 below.

In conjunction with the employment provided by these projects courses have been developed which are correlated with the work itself. They are given after working hours and employees are encouraged but not required to attend. Instruction is given by NYA supervisors, teachers from the adult education division of the WPA, county agents, home demonstration agents, vocational agriculture teachers, and public health nurses. Such courses, however, do not supplement all NYA work projects but rather are dependent upon local facilities and initiative.

### Resident Training Centers

A rapidly expanding phase of the work program is the operation of resident training centers for out-of-school unemployed youth who are drawn chiefly from rural areas and small communities.

The number of youth on resident projects increased from 800 in September 1937 to 7,900 in June 1938. These projects provide work experience and related instruction in agriculture, shop work, construction, and homemaking and are designed to permit project workers to reside at the site of the project. By the end of June 1938, about 250 resident projects located in 41 States had been established or approved. Most of them are located at agricultural and mechanical colleges, teachers colleges, vocational schools, agricultural or industrial high schools, experiment stations, conservation areas, and hospitals.

Through the construction and renovation of buildings, farming according to approved methods, shop work, and work in homemaking, boys and girls learn and apply approved methods and develop sound work habits. Boys working on construction jobs and in shops learn the fundamentals of construction work and how to handle tools. Boys employed on agricultural projects study different phases of scientific farming and methods of crop control and learn how to erect farm buildings. Girls learn the fundamentals of budgeting and diet, of health, and of home nursing. Along with the work on the projects the young people in resident training centers attend classes in poultry and stock raising, dairying, farm machinery and automobile mechanics, electricity, machine shop work, welding, and home economics. Classes are most frequently conducted by the educational institutions sponsoring the projects, often as part of their regular work. Others are conducted by NYA instructors and teachers employed on WPA education projects. On the average, each person employed on the resident training projects in March was enrolled in four classes.

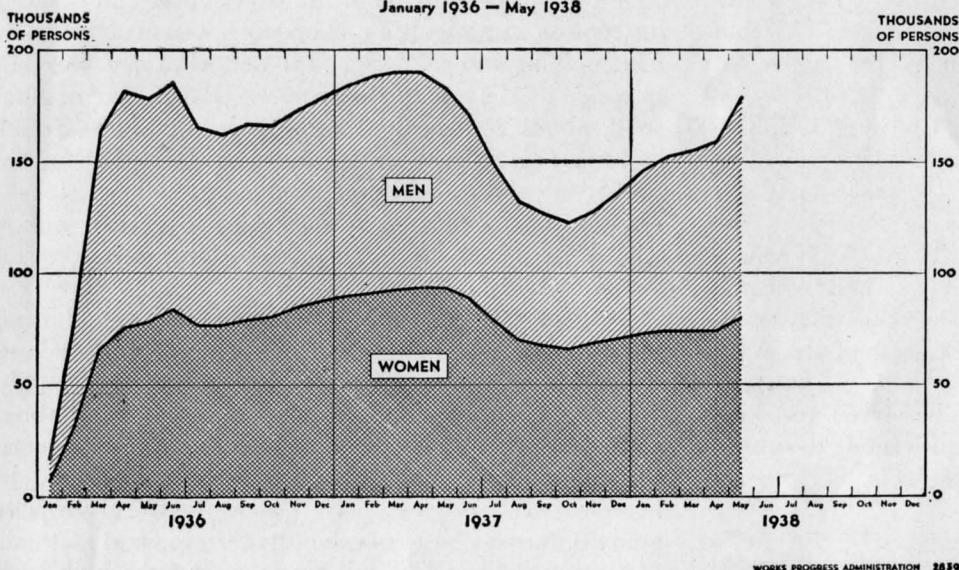
Resident training centers are operated in the same manner as other projects except that young people live on the site of the project for a period ranging from three to six months and earn their subsistence through work performed. In addition to subsistence each young



HARVEST AT A RESIDENT TRAINING PROJECT

CHART 10  
NYA WORK PROJECT EMPLOYMENT

January 1936 — May 1938



The general nature of the work performed on NYA projects and the relative emphasis on different kinds of activities are indicated by the numbers of persons employed on the various types of projects. Table 47 shows the distribution by types of projects of the 155,000 young persons employed in March 1938. The largest proportion of employees were engaged on clerical projects, which accounted for almost 20 percent of all NYA workers (15 percent working for governmental agencies and 4 percent for nongovernmental agencies such as health associations and welfare organizations).

person receives a small amount of cash each month for personal needs. Both subsistence costs and cash payments vary considerably among projects but in most instances total between \$17.50 and \$28.00. In March the average was \$24.98, with subsistence accounting for about two-thirds and cash payments for nearly one-third of the total amount.

Almost 10 percent of the NYA workers were employed on sewing projects and about the same number on workshop projects. Other types of projects to which substantial numbers were assigned were recreational facility and public buildings projects, each accounting for nearly 13 percent of the NYA workers.

## Employment

Operations on the NYA work program were begun in January 1936 and by June of that year 184,000 persons were at work. After moderate reductions in the summer months NYA work project employment expanded, reaching a peak of more than 190,000 workers in March and April 1937. Subsequently the number at work declined steadily to 123,000 in October. Increases since October 1937 brought the total to 179,000 persons by May 1938. The number employed during each month of the program's operation is given in Table 46.

Prior to May 1937 more young men than young women were employed on NYA projects, but from May through December of that year well over half of the NYA work project employees were young women. Since January 1938, however, young men have accounted for the greater share of project workers as may be seen in Chart 10. Of the 179,000 persons employed in May 1938, young men outnumbered young women by about 20,000.

Since the beginning of the work project program, persons certified as in need of relief have represented at least 95 percent of all workers employed on NYA projects. Of the total number employed in May 1938, 96.5 percent were so certified.

TABLE 46.—EMPLOYMENT ON NYA WORK PROJECTS, BY SEX AND BY RELIEF STATUS

MONTHLY—JANUARY 1936 TO MAY 1938

Month	Total	Men		Persons Certified as in Need of Relief	
		Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
1936					
January.....	16,751	10,179	60.8	15,760	94.0
February.....	78,755	47,676	60.5	75,130	95.4
March.....	163,491	97,872	59.9	157,240	96.2
April.....	181,279	105,743	58.3	174,015	95.9
May.....	177,846	99,935	56.2	170,436	95.8
June.....	184,256	100,989	54.8	176,291	95.6
July.....	164,792	88,600	53.8	156,699	95.0
August.....	161,571	85,385	52.9	154,131	95.4
September.....	166,664	87,773	52.7	159,048	95.4
October.....	165,741	85,387	51.5	158,412	95.6
November.....	172,402	87,439	50.7	164,799	95.6
December.....	178,106	90,904	51.0	170,431	95.7
1937					
January.....	184,807	94,799	51.3	177,015	95.8
February.....	189,298	96,992	51.2	181,045	95.6
March.....	191,576	97,730	51.0	183,666	95.9
April.....	192,132	96,393	50.2	184,477	96.0
May.....	184,556	89,135	48.3	177,155	96.0
June.....	172,816	81,940	47.4	165,698	95.9
July.....	149,836	70,267	46.9	143,397	95.7
August.....	133,111	62,148	46.7	127,399	95.7
September.....	127,238	59,105	46.5	121,764	95.7
October.....	122,827	56,850	46.3	117,684	95.8
November.....	127,279	58,986	46.3	122,255	96.1
December.....	136,026	65,870	48.4	130,496	95.9
1938					
January.....	145,951	73,308	50.2	140,041	96.0
February.....	152,105	78,242	51.4	146,091	96.0
March.....	154,833	81,136	52.4	148,900	96.2
April.....	158,890	85,301	53.7	153,093	96.4
May.....	179,274	99,738	55.6	173,060	96.5



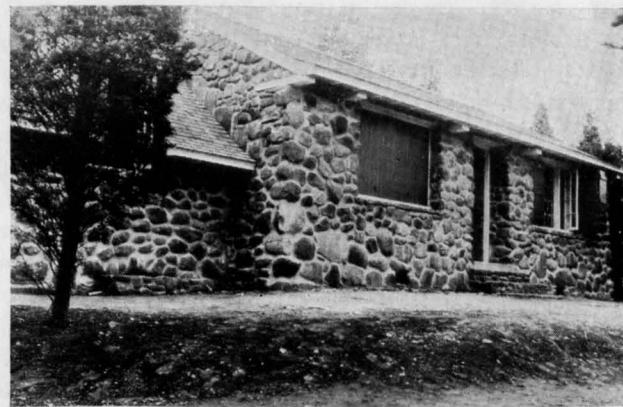
TABLE 47.—NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED ON NYA WORK PROJECTS, BY TYPES OF PROJECTS AND BY SEX

MARCH 1938

Type of Project	All Persons		Men	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent of total
Total.....	<sup>A</sup> 154,809	100.0	<sup>A</sup> 81,119	52.4
Highways, roads, and streets.....	6,243	4.0	6,094	97.6
Roadside improvement.....	3,022	1.9	3,001	99.3
Other highway, road, and street projects.....	3,221	2.1	3,093	96.0
Public buildings.....	19,898	12.8	19,368	97.3
Construction of new buildings.....	7,243	4.7	7,158	98.8
Remodeling and repairing of public buildings.....	4,632	2.9	4,451	96.1
Improvement of grounds.....	8,023	5.2	7,759	96.7
Recreational facilities (excluding buildings).....	19,858	12.8	19,337	97.4
Conservation.....	2,170	1.4	2,078	95.8
Goods.....	27,806	18.0	10,413	37.4
Sewing.....	14,566	9.4	223	1.5
Workshops.....	13,240	8.6	10,190	77.0
Education.....	8,075	5.2	2,952	36.6
Nursery schools.....	3,833	2.5	158	4.1
Resident training.....	4,242	2.7	2,794	65.9
Recreational leadership.....	10,201	6.6	5,117	50.2
Clerical.....	30,333	19.6	6,930	22.8
For Government agencies.....	23,752	15.3	5,393	22.7
For other than Government agencies.....	6,581	4.3	1,537	23.4
Professional and technical.....	9,067	5.8	2,476	27.3
Agricultural demonstration.....	2,146	1.4	1,273	59.3
Library service and book repair.....	6,110	3.9	934	15.3
Museum work.....	811	0.5	269	33.2
Survey and research.....	360	0.2	144	40.0
Art, music, drama, and writing.....	1,006	0.7	503	50.0
Home economics.....	7,685	5.0	146	1.9
School lunches.....	2,051	1.4	57	2.8
Homemaking.....	5,634	3.6	89	1.6
Youth center activities (n. e. c.).....	1,782	1.2	901	50.6
Other projects.....	10,325	6.7	4,660	45.1

<sup>A</sup> The total reported for the type of project distribution is slightly smaller than the total shown in the preceding table.

NOTE.—N. e. c.—not elsewhere classified.



NATURE MUSEUM BUILT BY NYA IN CONNECTICUT

As would be expected, practically all the workers on construction projects are boys, and almost all the jobs provided on sewing, nursery, school lunch, and home economics projects are for girls. A preponderance of girls are employed on white collar projects in general, but about equal numbers of boys and girls were employed on youth center activities, in the fields of art, music, drama, and writing, and on recreational leadership projects.

### Physical Accomplishments

Any discussion of the NYA work project program must recognize the accomplishments of the youth employed on this work. The extent of these accomplishments in physical terms is shown in a survey of the work finished through October 1, 1937. Certain outstanding totals reported under some 200 kinds of construction and white collar accomplishment items are summarized briefly in the following paragraphs.

NYA accomplishments in the field of recreation have been particularly extensive. Through October 1, 1937,



FOOT BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED BY NYA PROJECT WORKERS IN TEXAS

young persons employed on NYA projects built 725 new athletic fields and developed 284 new parks, somewhat smaller on the average than those completed by the WPA but together covering an area in excess of 3,000 acres. They completed over 1,100 new playgrounds, about half of which are school playgrounds. For winter recreation more than 600 new ice-skating rinks with a total area of about 7,500,000 square feet, 91 ski jumps, and nearly 200 miles of ski trails were completed by October 1, 1937. For summer sports 1,400 horseshoe courts, over 900 tennis courts, and about 180 handball courts were constructed. Several new swimming pools and wading pools have also been constructed and a few golf courses developed by NYA project workers. In addition to this new construction work NYA workers made extensive improvements to recreational facilities of all these types. The accomplishments in the field of recreation also include leadership work through the operation of 873 community centers and assistance at more than 13,000 other community recreation centers.

The number of public buildings completed by NYA workers approximates 1,500. Most of these are small buildings and almost half are for recreational purposes—pavilions, bath houses, etc. Also included among the new buildings are public garages, warehouses, schools, and numerous small buildings of miscellaneous types such as bus and street-car shelters. In addition, NYA workers renovated or remodeled over 2,100 public buildings, a large proportion of which are schools.

The 565 miles of road work completed by October 1937 was largely road improvement but included a small amount of new construction. Most of the work was done on unpaved roads in rural areas and in parks. NYA workers also built 237 bridges, most of which are small wooden spans averaging about 25 feet in length, installed 367 culverts, made 95,000 street signs and erected 41,000, painted over 2,200,000 feet of lines on highways and streets, built 74 miles of sidewalks and paths, and completed a large amount of roadside drainage and landscaping work.

Accomplishments too numerous to itemize in detail were also reported in connection with flood control, conservation, and sanitation. Notable among these is the construction of about 3,200 small dams for flood and erosion control and similar purposes, 380 retaining walls and revetments totaling almost 55,000 feet in length, and several miles of levees and embankments. NYA workers planted over a million trees in the reforestation of 10,500 acres of land, operated 252 plant and tree nurseries, and established 115 bird and game sanctuaries. Landscaping of thousands of acres of grounds around 6,000 public buildings and extensive drainage work for mosquito control and for purposes other than road improvement are also among the work completed on NYA projects.

Many of the NYA project workers, particularly the young women, are engaged in white collar work and other activities outside the construction field. Among the accomplishments in the nonconstruction field are the establishment of over 200 traveling libraries, about 600 new branch libraries, and 300 reading rooms in existing libraries. NYA youth also cataloged some 2,600,000 volumes and renovated over 3,500,000 volumes for schools and public libraries. In NYA sewing rooms more than 1,600,000 articles were produced, almost three-fourths of which were articles of clothing. NYA workers canned or preserved more than 3,300,000 pounds of food and served over 13,000,000 school lunches. Their health service activities included assistance at 340 medical and dental clinics, not to mention home examinations and nursing aid for immunization work.

Art and research activities complete the broad classes of NYA work program accomplishments. By October 1, 1937, young artists had finished 6,700 drawings, easel and mural paintings, and works of sculpture. They had made 790 etchings, lithographs, and wood-blocks, and over 7,950 posters. NYA workers also had completed 88 planning surveys and 118 statistical and research studies on a number of subjects, usually relating to youth problems.

## Expenditures

During the entire period of its operation the National Youth Administration has expended approximately \$81,700,000 on its work projects. About \$49,200,000 was spent in the fiscal years 1936 and 1937, as shown in Table 48. During the year ending June 30, 1938, expenditures totaled \$32,500,000. In addition to Federal funds expended, cosponsors of NYA projects had expended \$10,978,000 by June 30, 1938.

From the beginning of operations through June 30, 1938, 97 percent of the Federal expenditures have been

TABLE 48.—NYA EXPENDITURES, BY PROGRAMS  
QUARTERLY—OCTOBER 1935 THROUGH JUNE 1938

Quarter	Total	Student Aid	Work Projects
1935			
Fourth.....	\$5,401,958	\$5,397,974	\$3,984
1936			
First.....	11,200,524	8,353,599	2,846,925
Second.....	18,915,033	9,935,521	8,979,512
Third.....	8,966,749	336,897	8,629,852
Fourth.....	17,309,498	8,252,797	9,056,701
1937			
First.....	19,511,238	9,665,915	9,845,323
Second.....	19,824,711	10,009,561	9,815,150
Third.....	7,640,803	113,720	7,527,083
Fourth.....	12,822,086	5,593,870	7,228,216
1938			
First.....	14,492,485	6,368,885	8,123,600
Second.....	16,201,131	6,591,215	9,609,916
Cumulative October 1935 through June 1938.....	152,310,901	70,619,954	<sup>A</sup> 81,690,947

<sup>A</sup> The cumulative total reflects the reclassification of \$10,000 as Federal National-wide work program expenditures and of \$34,686 as NYA work project expenditures.



for personal services. Of the cosponsors' funds, \$4,329,000 has been used for labor costs, chiefly for supervision. The balance of the cosponsors' funds (\$6,649,000, or about 60 percent) was expended for such nonlabor items as are necessary in carrying out project work—supplies, materials, equipment, rents, and services.

## Hours and Wages

NYA project workers may not exceed a maximum of 8 hours of work a day, 40 hours a week, and (except supervisory and administrative employees) 70 hours a month. Workers averaged about 45 hours a month during 1937, and in recent months, about 48 or 49 hours.

Payment for work on NYA projects is made in accordance with a schedule of monthly earnings which is applicable to all workers except supervisors and administrative employees and owner-operators of trucks, teams, and equipment. Wage rates vary with the degree of skill required for the job, and the region of the country and the degree of urbanization of the county in which the project is prosecuted. Differentiation is made among four wage classes, three regions of the country, and two degrees of urbaniza-

TABLE 49.—AVERAGE MONTHLY HOURS, AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS, AND AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS OF ALL PERSONS AND OF RELIEF PERSONS EMPLOYED ON NYA WORK PROJECTS

QUARTERLY—MARCH 1936 TO MAY 1938

Month	Average Monthly Hours		Average Monthly Earnings		Average Hourly Earnings	
	Total	Persons certified as in need of relief	Total	Persons certified as in need of relief	Total	Persons certified as in need of relief
<i>1936</i>						
March.....	34.1	32.5	\$13.17	\$12.02	\$0.387	\$0.370
June.....	44.3	42.6	16.66	15.35	.376	.360
September.....	43.7	41.6	16.37	14.88	.375	.358
December.....	45.6	43.5	17.01	15.41	.373	.354
<i>1937</i>						
March.....	45.6	43.4	16.84	15.31	.370	.353
June.....	45.1	42.9	16.90	15.16	.375	.353
September.....	45.8	43.5	17.23	15.35	.376	.353
December.....	47.6	45.2	17.86	15.93	.375	.352
<i>1938</i>						
March.....	49.0	46.9	17.69	15.89	.361	.339
May.....	47.7	45.7	17.14	15.44	.359	.338

tion. The schedule presented as Table 2 in a preceding article gives rates, effective August 1, 1938, for each wage class, wage rate region, and urbanization group. These rates are similar to the rates at which NYA workers were previously paid except for certain minor differences. Before the changes were made the

rates for unskilled workers in Regions II and III were slightly lower. Also, the rates for all NYA workers in certain States (noted in the discussion accompanying the schedule) were lower owing to the fact that these States were then included in regions to which lower wage rates apply.

Earnings of all persons employed on NYA projects during May (including supervisors who work full time) averaged \$17.14. Young persons certified as in need of relief earned, on the average, \$15.44 in May.

Hourly rates of pay consistent with the rates being paid to youth in the locality for the same type of work are determined by the State Works Progress Administrator in cooperation with the State youth director. Hourly earnings of all persons employed on NYA projects in May averaged 36 cents, and of certified workers, 34 cents. Table 49 shows average monthly hours worked and average hourly and monthly earnings for selected periods since the beginning of the program.

## Guidance and Placement

In order to provide a medium through which young persons may proceed more intelligently in seeking private employment, the NYA has rounded out its program by sponsoring vocational guidance and job placement services. As a step toward satisfactory adjustment of potential workers the NYA has prepared 63 occupational or industrial bulletins which seek to give a picture of specific industries—their growth and decline, the job opportunities available, and the skills and requirements necessary for the jobs. Discussions of remuneration, promotional opportunities, and conditions of work are included. Such information is also disseminated by means of career conferences, individual counseling services, radio programs, and occupational classes for out-of-school youth.

NYA placement services for junior unemployed workers were set up in cooperation with and under the general supervision of the State offices of the United States Employment Service. These serve the group of younger workers who, because of inexperience and uncertainty concerning their own abilities and unfamiliarity with the requirements of a job, need special attention. Junior placement offices have been established in 79 cities in 32 States and the District of Columbia. Of the 271,418 young persons who had registered in these offices by May 1, 1938, a total of 109,038 had been placed in private industry. Representatives of the offices had visited 62,668 private employers to solicit jobs for young workers.







